

## **POSTSECONDARY OPTIONS - 2005**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **1. What is the Postsecondary Enrollment Options Act (PSEO)?**

The act provides for payment from a school district's state aid foundation grant for enrollment of certain high school students in postsecondary courses of education. The bill establishes eligibility criteria for students, institutions, and courses; requires eligible charges (tuition, mandatory course or material fees, and registration fees) to be billed to a school district; establishes enrollment and credit requirements; requires school districts to provide counseling and information to eligible students and their parents; and requires intermediate school districts to report to the Department of Education.

#### **2. Which students are eligible to participate in postsecondary options?**

Any student for whom the District feels it would be an appropriate option. Districts have always had the ability to support all students in postsecondary enrollment at any grade. The PSEO is specific in mandating all eligible students wishing to dual enroll **MUST** be allowed the postsecondary opportunity. Eligible students are those who are in grade 11 or 12, are enrolled in at least 1 high school course, and who have achieved a state endorsement in all subject areas of the MEAP (Mathematics, Science, Reading, Writing,). If the student hasn't achieved endorsements in all areas, the student is still eligible to take courses limited only to the areas in which he or she has received endorsements. Both 11th and 12th graders are also eligible to take courses within subjects for which there are no endorsements, such as philosophy, religion, psychology, sociology, anthropology, computer science, fine arts and/or foreign language courses not offered by the District, as long as they have taken all sections of the MEAP. State endorsement is not required in any specific area for participation. Grade point average is not a determining factor in eligibility to enroll.

#### **3. Must districts allow a student in grade 10 or 11 to take the MEAP High School Test?**

Yes. A parent or legal guardian may request in writing that a student in grade 10 or 11 be allowed to take all of the MEAP High School Test at any time the test is regularly given, including scheduled retest times. The request must state that it is being made for the purposes of qualifying for an endorsed diploma in order to qualify for postsecondary enrollment pursuant to Public Act 160, 1996. Parents and students should be aware that the MEAP High School Test was developed to cover course work through the end of 10th grade.

#### **4. When must districts notify students about dual enrollment opportunities?**

The language states that **by March 1 of each year**, school districts shall provide general information about the Postsecondary Enrollment Options Act and college equivalent classes such as AP to all students in grade 8 or higher. Eligible students in grades 11 and 12 shall receive a letter, signed by the student's principal, indicating their eligibility.

**5. Exactly what costs are school districts required to pay?**

The language states that all school districts must pay students' tuition and mandatory course fees, including technology fees, materials fees, registration fees and any late fees charged by the postsecondary institution. Eligible charges do not include books, transportation, parking costs or activity fees. However, under the PSEOA, the total amount of tuition and fee support shall not exceed either of the following:

- a. The total amount of the tuition and fees for the course(s).
- b. The sum of the state portion of the district's foundation allowance, per membership pupil, adjusted for the proportion of the school year that the student attends the postsecondary institution.

***For example:***

Student's State Portion of the Foundation Allowance for 2004-2005 school year might be \$6,700 per year; \$3,350 per semester

Course Enrollment for One Semester - Two courses at the college level and four courses at the local school district

Proportion of Time Student is at College - 2/6--or 1/3 x

$\$3,350 = \$1,116$  ( $\$3,350 - \$1,116 = \$2,234$ )

Thus, the local district would pay the actual charge for tuition and fees for the two college courses or \$1,116, whichever is less. Calculations are based on the total number of both high school and college courses, equaling 100 percent of enrolled time.

**6. May students dually enroll in more than one course at a postsecondary institution?**

Yes. The enabling legislation does not set any limitations on the number of college courses in which a student may enroll. The only stipulations are that the student be enrolled in both the district and postsecondary institution during the district's regular academic year, and be enrolled in at least one high school course. The legislation does not apply to any postsecondary courses a student is enrolled in addition to being enrolled full-time in the local district.

**7. Is the payment for which school districts are responsible based on the number of credits a student is taking or the number of courses involved?**

Courses. The language states that school districts must pay tuition, registration fees, materials fees, and required *course* fees for the postsecondary *course(s)* of the dually enrolled pupil.

**8. Are there any limitations regarding which courses a student may take at a postsecondary institution?**

Yes. The legislation for the 2004-2005 school year stipulates that a school district is not obligated to support a course that is offered by the school, or that is not available to the student because of a scheduling conflict, as determined by the board of the school district. Courses that are a hobby craft or recreational course; a course that is in the areas of physical education, theology, divinity or religious education, are not eligible for tuition support.

**However**, on June 29, 2000, Governor Engler signed House Bill 5534 (Public Act 258), which creates the Career and Technical Preparation Act. The purpose of this act is to provide a wider variety of options to high school students by encouraging and enabling qualified students to enroll in courses or programs in career and technical preparation programs at eligible postsecondary education institutions.

This act took effect April 1, 2001, and is under the auspices of the Department of Career Development. By March 1 of each school year, school districts will need to provide general information about the career and technical preparation enrollment options under this act to all students in grade 8 or higher, as is currently provided for AP and dual enrollment.

**9. Do students have to “exhaust” the high school’s curriculum before they are eligible for postsecondary enrollment?**

No. The PSEOA language states that the postsecondary course(s) eligible for tuition support be course(s) not offered by the district, but does not require students to take all available high school courses before enrolling in postsecondary courses. However, if the district offers college level equivalent courses (Advanced Placement and IB), these courses have precedence over an entry-level postsecondary course. Also, high school credits granted to a student under this act shall be counted toward the graduation and subject area requirements of the school district.

**10. May students attend college classes in the evening?**

Students may elect to take college courses during the school day, in the evening or on weekends. Courses should be taken on campus or through a virtual university. If a public school pupil successfully completes a college level equivalent course that is offered by electronic means, including, but not limited to, the Internet, digital broadcast, or satellite network, and is offered by a school district, a regionally accredited college or university, or the Michigan Virtual High School described in Section 1481, the district shall do all of the following:

- a. Grant appropriate high school credit for completion of the course.
- b. Count that credit toward the graduation and subject area requirements of the school district or public school academy.

**11. What is the Michigan Virtual High School?**

The Michigan Virtual High School is a development of the Michigan Virtual University and was designed to expand curricular offerings for high schools across the state, create a statewide instructional model using interactive multimedia tools, and provide pupils and teachers with opportunities to develop skills through on-line learning. In order to further expand the options of qualified high school students, the Michigan Virtual University has also developed the Michigan Virtual AP Academy. The goal of the Academy is to make Advanced Placement courses available to all qualified students within the State of Michigan. For more information, visit their web site at: <http://www.mivu.org>

**12. Precisely which postsecondary schools may students attend?**

The PSEOA language states that support is available to students attending public or private, degree-granting postsecondary institutions, that choose to participate, in this state. The Michigan Virtual High School, the Michigan Virtual AP Academy and the Michigan Virtual University are also recognized by the state as accredited institutions.

**13. Can students receive PSEO tuition/fee support for college courses taken during the summer/spring term?**

The language states that students may receive support for courses during the school district’s regular academic year. Thus, if the district’s academic year is September through June, the district is not responsible for tuition/fee support of students attending summer college classes.

However, many postsecondary institutions offer a spring term, which begins during a district's academic year and ends during the summer. If 50 percent or more of the college class/term falls within the local district's regular academic year, students must be allowed to enroll and receive tuition/fee support.

**14. Can local districts provide a greater amount of tuition/fee support to students than is required in the PSEO and Section 21b language?**

Yes. The language of both pieces of legislation states that districts are required to pay an amount not to exceed the lesser of the actual charges for tuition and mandatory course fees, materials fees and registration fees, or the state portion of the district's foundation allowance, adjusted for the proportion of the school year that the student attends the postsecondary institution. However, districts may provide a larger amount, including books, transportation, parking and activities fees. If districts elect to pay for books under this section, the books are the property of the district and turned over to the district to be used as it sees fit upon completion of the course. Districts may elect to use the local school operating revenue for this purpose.

**15. Who decides what type of credit a student will receive for postsecondary enrollment?**

The language states that, at the time the eligible student enrolls in a postsecondary course, he/she will designate whether the course is for high school or postsecondary credit, or both, and shall notify the high school and the postsecondary institution of her/his decision. Students taking more than one postsecondary course may make different credit designations for different courses.

**16. Should districts accept the grade a student receives in a postsecondary course and incorporate it into the student's high school transcript and grade point average GPA?**

The language does not address the issue of grades. However, in its Guide for the College Bound Student-Athlete, the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) requires that all core courses used for collegiate athletic eligibility must indicate a grade and be calculated into the student's high school GPA. This requirement only pertains to Division I or II collegiate athletes. It is of great importance students are informed of these regulations and offered the opportunity to request a grade on their transcripts, if credit is requested.

**17. How much high school credit must a district grant a student for completion of a postsecondary course?**

The language states that a school district must grant academic credit if the student successfully completes a course, as determined by the postsecondary institution. The district shall determine the amount of high school credit granted. The high school credits granted to a student must be counted toward the graduation requirements and subject area requirements of the school district.

**18. May a student audit a college course under the Postsecondary Enrollment Options Act?**

No. Postsecondary courses taken under the PEOA cannot be audited.

**19. May adult education students participate?**

No. Adult education students do not generate a foundation allowance and thus, local districts are not required to support them in PSEO.

**20. What issues should counselors address when they meet with students considering dual enrollment?**

Counseling is critical. Students capable of college-level curricula are not automatically knowledgeable about college course selections and enrollment process. To the extent possible, districts shall provide counseling services to each eligible student and his or her parent or guardian of the benefits, risks, and possible consequences of enrolling in a postsecondary course. A district may provide the counseling in a group meeting if additional individual counseling is also made available. Counselors must also encourage the student to seek additional counseling at the postsecondary institution.

**21. How does this legislation interface with existing arrangements between local districts and postsecondary institutions, for example, districts that contract with community colleges for vocational-technical courses?**

Programs such as these are the decision of the local school districts and participating postsecondary institutions, and are usually funded with vocational-technical education monies. They are not considered as dual enrollment, but as a component of the high school curriculum, and are not affected by this legislation.

**22. Can Section 57.3 funds (gifted and talented programs) be used to pay a portion of the costs for dually enrolled students, or to support students?**

The PSEO language states that students who qualify for dual enrollment will be supported by the funds allocated by the state portion of the students' foundation allowance. Section 57.3 funds may be used to support the unique needs of high ability students (K-12) which cannot be met within the regular classroom, and which are designated in each student's individual educational plan. This may include courses at a college that do not fit within the PSEO guidelines, such as college course work for students not yet in grade 11.

**23. Can districts, stipulate that dually enrolled students must "successfully" complete college courses before tuition and fee support is paid?**

No. The language states that if a student provides the postsecondary institution with written proof of eligibility, the postsecondary institution will transmit a bill to the district detailing the eligible charges for each eligible course. The language also states that if a dually enrolled pupil does not complete the postsecondary course, the postsecondary institution shall forward to the district any funds that are refundable due to non-completion of the course.

**24. How should districts count students involved in postsecondary enrollment in terms of full-time equated membership?**

The language stipulates that for students enrolled in a postsecondary institution under this act, the student's enrollment in both the school district and the postsecondary institution shall be counted as enrollment in the school district. A student shall not be considered to be enrolled in a district less than full-time solely because of the effect of the student's postsecondary enrollment, including necessary travel time.

**25. How should local districts process PEOA payments on their budget breakdowns?**

Districts should use Function Code 113: High School Instructional Costs under Purchased (Contractual) Services.

**26. How will districts report to the Department of Education?**

School districts report the following information as required by Section 18(3) is submitted:

- a) total dollars expended for students involved in postsecondary enrollment;
- b) number of students eligible for postsecondary enrollment;
- c) number of pupils involved in postsecondary enrollment during the preceding school year (aggregate and by grade level);
- d) the percentage of the district's enrollment represented by students involved in postsecondary enrollment;
- e) the number of postsecondary courses paid for by the district under this act;
- f) the number of postsecondary courses for which postsecondary credit was granted;
- g) the number of postsecondary courses for which high school credit was granted; and
- h) the number of postsecondary courses which were not completed by students.

**27. What is the definition of a College Level Equivalent Course (CLEC)?**

A CLEC is defined to mean a course offered in high school, for which a student receives high school credit and may receive college credit, if the student successfully passes a college level equivalent credit examination. The board of a school district, board of directors of a public school academy, or governing board of a non-public school shall consider providing college level equivalent courses either directly, through an intermediate school district program, by virtual classes or by agreement in a consortium or cooperative program. Advanced Placement courses are one example of CLEC.

**28. Must districts offer college level equivalent courses?**

School boards shall consider providing college level equivalent courses either directly or cooperatively. AP course information can be found at; <http://apcentral.collegeboard.com>

**29. When and how would students be informed about college level equivalent courses?**

Schools have to ensure that every student in grade 8 or higher is provided with specific information about college level equivalent courses available in their district, intermediate school district, virtual Advanced Placement courses, or in a consortium or cooperative program.

**30. Must districts comply with this legislation?**

Yes. The law states that districts and public school academies “*shall*” use funds allocated under the State School Aid Act to support participation in postsecondary options of eligible high school students at postsecondary institutions. Thus, districts and public school academies **must** comply.

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